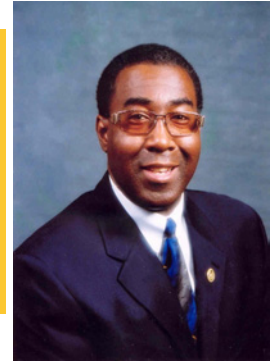


SENATOR SAMUEL SMITH, JR.



NEW JOBS on the horizon for Hoosiers

While the country continues to resonate with the effects of the national recession, Indiana has made strong progress in job creation and economic development.

According to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Indiana's seasonally adjusted payroll in June of 2004 grew by 4,100 jobs. This is the sixth consecutive month Indiana has experienced employment growth in comparison to the same period last year.

And, more jobs are on the horizon. According to IU's Center for Econometric Model Research, Indiana will create about 44,000 new jobs by early next year.

The Indiana Department of Commerce has received 151 inquiries from site selection consultants requesting information about relocating to Indiana. This compares with 140 inquiries for the same period last year, indicating a growing interest in Indiana by companies looking to relocate or expand existing facilities.

- 44,000 -
Number of new
Hoosier jobs
expected by 2005

- 6 -
Consecutive
number of months
of job growth

- \$23 Million -
Investment by
American Signature
in the new LaPorte
county facility



(Continued on page 2)

Dear Friends,

The latest statistics indicate that more than 43 million people are uninsured in the United States, and the cost and availability of quality healthcare is a growing concern for every American.

Living without health insurance is not just a symptom of unemployment. Working families, small business owners, and temporary employees suffer as well, with 80% of those uninsured living in a family with at least one family member employed full- or part-time.

In Indiana, an estimated 687,700 Hoosiers, or nearly 13% of the state's population, are uninsured. Health care costs to Hoosier companies have risen 10% from 2003.

I am very concerned that many Hoosiers do not receive the quality healthcare they need and deserve to maintain healthy and productive life styles and families.

As the General Assembly prepares for the 2005 legislative session, I encourage you to contact me or a member of my staff by calling toll-free 1-800-382-9467 ext. 2-9532 with any concerns you have regarding the rising cost of healthcare or other issues of importance to you. Together, I believe we can find the solutions to these problems and make a difference.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel Smith Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

RESIDENCE

Post Office Box 3218
East Chicago, IN 46312
219-397-2024

STATE HOUSE

200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785
800-382-9467

ONLINE

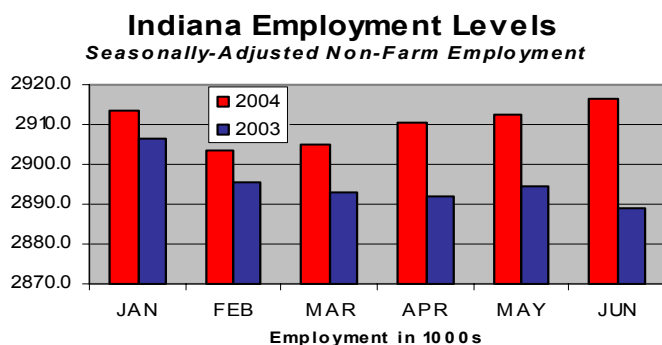
S2@IN.gov
www.IN.gov/S2

REPRESENTING SENATE DISTRICT 2
INCLUDING EAST CHICAGO, CALUMET TOWNSHIP AND PORTIONS OF
GARY, GRIFFITH, HIGHLAND, HAMMOND AND MERRILLVILLE

(Continued from page 1)

Recognizing this growth, *Site Selection Magazine* reported in its May 2004 issue that Indiana received the "2003 Competitiveness Award" which is based on ten criteria tracking job and business growth each year. The Hoosier state earned 146 points, while second-place Kentucky earned 114. The award can be partly attributed to the passage of comprehensive tax restructuring legislation in 2002, which eliminated some business and inventory taxes and increased the research and development tax credit from 5 percent to 10 percent.

In 2003, the legislature made unprecedented investments in job creation activities, including a \$75-million investment in Indiana's 21st Century Research and Technology Fund, the creation of a venture capital tax credit, and funding for certified technology parks. As a result, Indiana has leapt forward with a modern tax structure that attracts new businesses and encourages the expansion of current businesses.



Locally, Unilever of Hammond has been awarded a \$145,000 training grant from the Indiana Department of Commerce to help the company become more competitive in the marketplace. Unilever is investing \$6 million to purchase new equipment, and the grant will be used to train employees on its use. Unilever makes household products including Vaseline and Q-tip cotton swabs.

Indiana is making progress that is paying off in real jobs for Hoosiers. I will continue to work for the passage of progressive legislation to further Indiana's economic development efforts.

Sentencing policy study committee looks at overcrowding

The General Assembly established a special study committee in 2003 to examine Indiana's sentencing laws and policies. Among other things, the panel has been studying inmate populations in state-run correctional facilities and the availability of sentencing options for nonviolent offenders such as work release and home detention programs.

It is certainly no secret that many DOC facilities are often overcrowded and understaffed. When this happens, it works to the detriment of everyone – correctional staff, inmates, and taxpayers.

Legislators and other state officials should also take a serious look at the safety and compensation which we provide to our correctional officers. Every day we ask these men and women to put their lives on the line to provide safety and security in our correctional facilities. While the committee has not been specifically directed to examine these issues, know that I will continue to address these concerns and seek improvements.

For more information on interim committees, log on to www.in.gov/legislative/interim or call 317-232-9856.

Smith honored by local community

Senator Smith recently received several recognitions from local community organizations. The local chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority in East Chicago honored Senator Smith during its annual "Men of Valor" banquet in June.

The senator was also presented with an award for participating in the Dunbar-Pulaski Middle School's Career Day in Gary. Presented by Principal Charlotte Wright, the award recognized the senator and other community leaders for their involvement in the annual event. The theme was "Volunteers Make a Difference" and highlighted the importance of education and career paths for young adults.

Addressing the rising cost of prescription drugs

State programs help keep medications available to Hoosiers with low and fixed incomes

According to a recent study, approximately one out of three Americans under the age of 65 were without health insurance for all or part of 2002 and 2003. Even more Americans live without prescription drug coverage because their health insurance does not include drug coverage from their private or public benefit programs. AARP predicts that the rising trend in pricing will continue to concern and threaten the health of American consumers as these prices outpace inflation, a fact particularly troubling for those on modest and fixed incomes.

Serving the uninsured

During the past legislative session, I supported the passage of House Enrolled Act 1251 which created a Regional Drug Repository Program. Now underway, this program organizes the collection and redistribution of unused prescription drugs to nonprofit health clinics serving the uninsured, indigent, or underinsured. Pharmacies, health care clinics, and other facilities serve as repositories, accepting drug donations from health care providers, hospices, and hospitals. The donated prescription drugs are then available at a low or no cost to health clinic patients under a physician's order. The program

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will provide a relief in prescription drug costs to state and federal programs that serve low income patients while increasing the availability of prescription drugs to those in need.

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Expanded discounts for Hoosier seniors

HoosierRx is Indiana's Prescription Drug Program for low-income seniors that provides discounts on prescription drugs for eligible seniors. Recent changes to the federal Medicare drug discount program have prompted changes in the state's HoosierRx program.



When using their HoosierRx Drug Card, enrollees will now receive a 75% discount off the cost of prescriptions. The new maximum benefit for current HoosierRx enrollees has been increased from \$1,000 to \$1,200. New enrollees will also receive 75% off the cost of prescriptions, but maximum benefits will be based on when they apply.

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If a senior is already enrolled in the HoosierRx program, it is in their best interest to also sign up for a Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card because it offers a larger discount. The HoosierRx Card can provide important supplemental assistance to seniors after they reach the maximum benefit of their Medicare-Approved Drug Card.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

HoosierRx

1-866-267-4679
www.in.gov/HoosierRx

Medicare

1-800-633-4227
www.medicare.gov

How will Hoosier students pay for college?

The CollegeChoice 529 Investment Plan is a qualified tuition program that offers an exceptional opportunity to save and invest for the future college expenses of any Indiana child.

Indiana residents can enroll in the age-based investment option by calling 866-400-7526, or logging on to www.collegechoiceplan.com.

- ⇒ 60% of students have to borrow money to pay for their undergraduate degree
- ⇒ \$15,375 is the average student debt upon graduating from a four-year public university
- ⇒ 43,766 participants were in the CollegeChoice Plan as of May 2004



State Senator Samuel Smith, Jr.
200 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785
Toll-free: 1-800-382-9467
E-mail: S2@IN.gov

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Lake County Property Taxes

Keeping taxpayers in their homes

Although there are still many uncertainties with regard to property taxes in Lake County, I am pleased with the efforts that state and local officials have made thus far to ensure that residents can afford to remain in their homes.

In June, the Lake County Council approved a payment plan for taxpayers whose 2002 taxes had increased by \$1,200 or more. This allows those hardest hit by the reassessment to spread their payment obligations over six months.

Additionally, Governor Kernan's 2 percent circuit breaker will limit 2002 property taxes to 2 percent

of a home's assessed value. Homeowners who paid more can get a refund check for 2002 taxes or receive a credit toward their 2003 taxes, which are payable this year. Although I recognize that the burden of repaying the \$15.3 million loan from the state is still in debate, I am hopeful that our local officials will find a fair compromise.

I applaud these efforts to ensure that our neighborhoods are stable and Hoosiers are able to stay in their homes. As your state senator, I will continue to monitor the Lake County situation and advocate for reform to ensure the property tax burden is fairly distributed.